

REMARKS

Claims 69 and 71 are amended. Claims 69-74 are pending in the application.

Claims 69-74 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the applicant regards as the invention. The Examiner indicates that the claim 69 recitation of "in electrical connection with the outer surface of the conductive pillar" renders the claim indefinite because the type of connection between the conductive plug and the conductive pillar is unclear. The Examiner states that because the claim recites that the outer surface is wider than the lower surface, and that the outer surface is in electrical connection with the pillar, the outer surface "would presumably be the side surface of the plug and not the top surface".

Applicant notes that the claims are to be interpreted in light of the specification. Attention is directed to the specification at page 6, lines 7-10 and each of figures 5-22 which clearly identifies "an outer surface 28" and shows outer surface 28 being wider than the lower surface of a conductive pillar where the lower surface is in electrical connection with a diffusion region. However, in order to further clarify the claims, claim 69 is amended to recite an upper surface that opposes and is wider than the lower surface of a conductive pillar, where a conductive plug is in electrical connection with the upper surface of the conductive pillar. The amendment to claim 69 is for clarification purposes and is not intended to limit the scope of the claims.

Independent claim 69 particularly points out and distinctly claims the subject matter which the applicant regards as the invention. Dependent claim 71 is amended to appropriately depend from independent claim 69. Accordingly, applicant requests

withdrawal of the § 112 rejection of claim 69 and dependent claims 70-74 which depend there from in the Examiner's next action.

Pending claims 69-74 are allowable for the reasons set forth above and the absence of any prior art based rejection. Accordingly, applicant requests formal allowance of pending claims 69-74 in the Examiner's next action.

Applicant notes that the supplemental information disclosure statement submitted on October 27, 2003 has been received and entered by the PTO. However, an initialed copy of such information disclosure statement has not been provided. Accordingly, applicant respectfully requests that an initialed copy of such IDS be provided with the Examiner's next action.

Respectfully submitted,

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